



Solent G-AHIN flying over the Southampton docks with the pontoon and passenger buildings in the foreground. (Below) Natives at Port Bell more interested in the camera than in the flying boat which they had come to see.



Air Cruise . . .

interest, and creates a strong impression of confidence.

At Augusta the corporation intends to increase and improve the accommodation; in fact, a move to new buildings is contemplated; it is therefore pointless to criticise the present arrangements as inadequate and not up to the usual high standard. Similarly, a change is expected in arrangements for the stop in the Nile Delta. By August B.O.A.C. should be operating from Lake Mariut, Alexandria, where an alighting area, a slipway and pontoons, have been prepared. This base would have been used long before had not the retaining wall caused some trouble with excessive leakage. Construction is well on the way to being completed, however, and Alexandria will then be used by all flying-boat services. Hotel accommodation at the port is easier than at Cairo, and many travellers will welcome the change.

On the southbound flight the night stop at Luxor, on the site of the ruins of the ancient city of Thebes, will appeal to those who would not normally be afforded the opportunity of visiting the old temples of Luxor and Karnak. There has been some criticism that a night stop is not made at Khartoum, but accommodation is extremely scanty in the city, and there is no indication that it will improve. Although the corporation already operates landplanes into the airfield at Khartoum, an overlap of passenger and aircraft handling staffs would be impractical.

From Luxor through Gordon's Tree Camp at Khartoum to refuel, and on to Port Bell, Lake Victoria, is the longest single day's flight, and it is a welcome change when about 2 hours from E.T.A. at Port Bell the characterless desert changes gradually to scrub and eventually to rich red soil and beautiful green countryside. At Port Bell, so near the Equator, the climate is pleasant and the scenery almost English in character. The passenger-handling arrangements have been taken over by East African Airways, and a reception building and jetty have been built at the head of the lake. Some 5 miles along the road to Kampala, the nearest town, a rest camp has been erected and is rented by B.O.A.C. The accommodation is simple but artistic and refreshing. At 4,000ft actual, and 5,000ft density height, the longer take-off run from Lake Victoria is noticeable. The countryside immediately surrounding the alighting area at Port Bell is dotted with hills which, although not high, make night operations hazardous. These, therefore, are not attempted. In the main, the European population is connected with the development of Uganda, and regular periods of leave to the U.K.